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CHINESE AMBITION

by

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Preface

The following paper is an assessment of Chinese ambition in the current era. I focused my research on the historical and current development of Chinese strategic courses of action since Mao Zedong's rise to power through today and I have tried to project possible courses of action. I choose Chinese ambition as a research topic because of the current US strategic focus on China concerning nuclear proliferation, China's preferred nation trading partner, China's admission to the World Trade Organization, and China's national strategic goals, military development, and arms proliferation especially in South Asia.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of those people and organizations that helped make this project possible. Lieutenant Colonel Mark Barnhart provided me with focus, direction, and academic freedom to ensure this project was complete given the limitations of length and the volume of material available on the subject. I would like to give special thanks to the Air University Librarians whose patience and expertise shine through daily.

Abstract

The Concept of this paper is to identify, analyze, and evaluate China's strategic ambition and national interests, and to generally understand China's regional position in Asia with specific regard to South Asia. China's place in world affairs has been a hot topic of the world's political scientist, statesmen, politicians, and military leaders. China's future, its growth, and its position as a world power are of great interest to China's neighbor states, the developed world, and especially the United States.

The birth of Chinese leadership and of Chinese nation building was begun during the Spring and Autumn period (770 BC) and has grown with patience and revolution into the Communist era of today. China's national strategy and use of their instruments of power (IOP) in the past and present can be used to determine how China will implement their IOP's in the future. China's national and International relations agenda, issues, and interest reflect an aggressive and forceful state policy of engagement with most of the world while containing perceived US hegemony. The Chinese have opposed hegemonic activity in Asia by opposing the influence of the Soviet Union in South and Southeast Asia, and as well opposed the growth in strength of a regional challenger in India. The Chinese have supported Pakistan for the past 30 years as a testimony to how determined and patience the Chinese are in attaining their national objectives.

China has launched a campaign of modernization, peace and stability through sovereignty and security. China is in the process of rebuilding its armed forces and its economy through

slow growth and transformation, and at the same time China has claimed territories lost during the Qing Dynasty as well as territories that encompass the East and South China Sea's.

China, in its opposition to perceived US hegemonism, has begun an asymmetric assault on US interest around the world and in the US. China won a contract to operate two ports in the Panama Canal Zone and has attempted to gain control of port facilities at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard in 1997. In 1996 and as later reported in 1999 during congressional testimony agents of the Chinese government attempted to influence the US presidential election by contributing large amounts of campaign funds to the Clinton-Gore campaign in exchange for influence and favors. The Chinese will continue to oppose US influence in Asia through asymmetric means, and by engaging and encouraging other third world actors to oppose US interest as third party actors intent on forcing the US to spend national wealth containing low level threats to its national interest.

Part 1

The Birth of Chinese Ambition

Overview and Focus

“All warfare is based on deception”¹

— Sun Tzu “The Art of War”

The Concept of this paper is to identify, analyze, and evaluate China’s strategic ambition and national interests, and to generally understand China’s regional position in Asia with specific regard to South Asia. China’s place in world affairs has been a hot topic of the world’s political scientist, statesmen, politicians, and military leaders. China’s future, its growth, and its position as a world power is of great interest to China’s neighbor states, the developed world, and especially the United States. It is important that military professionals have an understanding of the Earth’s most populous nation as a potential friend and as a potential adversary.

My research has led me to focus on three areas. First, we will conduct an historical analysis of Chinese leadership and Chinese nation building from the Spring and Autumn period (770 BC) to the Communist era of today sighting a few highlights that reflects China’s path and ethos as a nation. Second, we will examine China’s national strategy and how the Chinese have used their instruments of power in the past and present to develop a notion of how they might use them in the future. Third, we will view China’s national and International relations agenda, issues, and interest using South Asia as a focal point.

China has emerged as a regional power in Asia and is exercising and expanding its sphere of influence in the world through increased diplomatic engagement, economic engagement, and military modernization. China's policies have created a security dilemma for Asia and the United States. China's policies appear to be purely defensive at first glance but in reality are designed and orchestrated to contain and restrain potential threats to China's interest and to repel outside influence in Asia.² How has China come to this point in its history? What methods does China use to influence Asian and world affairs? What is China's position and relationship with its boarder states? What are China's national interests? What are China's national objectives? What is China's grand strategy? What is China's position and relationship mean to the United States?

A History of China's Struggle

Through China's history the philosophies of Confucianism and the military philosophies and concepts of Sun Tzu have played a significant role in the development of China's focus and approach to its national strategic thought. The history of China is replete with a tradition of strong leadership with some leaders in recent history having approached the status of a god like supreme leaders. Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping had been venerated to this level, giving China one national and strategic voice on issues. When Deng Xiaoping began to lose power late in life he named his successor, in an attempt to ease the transfer of his power as supreme leader to Jiang Zimen. The Chinese constitution doesn't allow the direct transfer of the supreme leaders power to his successor. Jiang Zimen, the current leader of China, was not able until the last few years to establish a span of control that could give China a more singular voice on international issues. A question we may ask is why Communism is becoming for China another dynasty; not a dynasty handed down from father to son but from peer elite to peer elite. China's leaders

reference the writings of Sun Tzu and other notable Chinese philosophers and are organized in practice around ancient Chinese cultural philosophies. The dynasties of ancient China have played a critical role in the development of the modern Chinese governmental processes, political direction, and national thought. Let us examine some of the historical signpost on the way toward the present Chinese mindset in hopes that we can gain insight into China's ambition.³

Before Mao Zedong and Communism.

Chinese civilization is rich in heritage and culture it has been a driving force throughout China's history and remains a critical link to Chinese politics today. Chinese history and its cultural heritage influence the attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of the people and the government of China. China is an ancient country that has a history of offensive and defensive wars as well as periods of peace. China was built by conquest and was unified during the Warring Kingdoms Period (475-221 BC). There were several states in this region that implemented the use of mutual defensive walls for the protection of people, lands, and resources in China. As early as 770 BC defensive walls were being used to protect China, "during the early Spring and Autumn period (770-476 BC) these dukedom states were building defensive walls against one another known as 'Mutual Defense Walls of the States' which measured thousands of meters in length. In 221 BC Qinshihung unified China. He built mutual defense walls to protect his lands from northern barbarian nomads."⁴ "Zhu Yuanzhang (1368 AD), the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), directed the use of Mutual Defensive Walls to protect Ming Dynasty territory. The nomadic Tumd (1550) Mongols began to assault the city of Gubeikou from China's northern border of the Ming Dynasty (1522 to 1566). The Ming army surrendered when attacked by the Tumd cavalymen. The invaders drove straight into Ming

territory and sacked Miyun, Huairou, and Shunyi, three towns in the suburbs of Beijing. Prime Minister Yan Song (1480-1567) ordered soldiers to keep the city gate of Beijing closed and refused to fight the enemy.”⁵ It is easy to see the dedication to the defense the Chinese have displayed over thousands of years following the philosophy of Sun Tzu displaying a willingness to avoid a losing fight in order to fight another day when victory is certain. Even today and in China’s recent history Chinese leaders have attempted to protect the sovereignty of its territory from outside influences. China’s history is not based only in peaceful defense of its territory and empire as described above, but also has a tradition of offense empire building.

The Former Han Dynasty was the longest lasting dynasty in terms of longevity of any dynasty in Chinese history. The Former Han Dynasty is the dynasty that most Chinese people identify with today, referring to themselves as the “people of the Han”. The Former Han Dynasty was founded by a commoner, Liu Pang, who was one of several rebel generals who fought and defeated the Ch’in Dynasty. The Ch’in where the founding dynasty of the Chinese legalist form of government which was used by many other dynasties that followed the Ch’in. Liu Pang gained control of the area around the Wei River and after the defeat of the Ch’in he entered into territorial disputes with other rebel general warlords over control of China from which Liu Pang emerged as emperor, reunifying China. Liu Pang as the “Exalted Emperor of Han rejected the legalism and administration of the Ch’in and instituted a system of small semi-independent feudal states moving away from the centralized institutions of the Ch’in. The rebel origins of the Han dynasty in Chinese history played a larger role in the twentieth century when communist and republicans would use the same rebel strategies and support to overthrow of the Qing dynasty. Han Wu Ti was a great and powerful Chinese emperor of the Former Han Dynasty because of his aggressive policies to expand China’s borders and open the region to

economic trade. From 141 BC to 13 AD Han Wu Ti expanded China's territories south into Vietnam, eastward into Korea, established Chinese colonies south of the Gobi Desert, and established outpost and additional colonies in Central Asia. He was responsible for the establishment of the Silk Road trade route, which brought Chinese culture to Europe and economic and commercial growth to China. The Former Han Dynasty finally fell in 23 AD as the result unfair taxation, land confiscation as a means of land reform, years of natural disasters and famine, and finally as a result of a peasant revolt conducted by a secret society known as the "Red Eyebrows".⁶

The China of the Han Dynasty cradled in central China which was destroyed in 23 AD was not that much different than Mao Zedong's China in 1921 AD. The China of Mao Zedong was a nation in chaos. Four million peasant people lived hand to mouth in a day to day existence while tens of millions of these peasants didn't own land and those who did own small plots barely survived. The peasant was abused and pillaged by tax collectors, robber baron landlords, soldiers, and bandits, and Mother Nature as well simply made it difficult to survive in the services-less society of rural China. The peasants, struggled from the first breath of life to the last, they were illiterate and lived in fear of being forced into military work building roads and waterworks regardless of the season. China was a feudal nation during both these periods. The Han Dynasty faced the same situation two thousand years earlier when peasant revolts were brought about by allowing the rich to escape taxation placing a high tax burden on the middle and peasant classes. The situation was complicated by foolish land reform, and by Mother Nature's hand as a result the Han Dynasty fell in 23 AD.⁷

China may also lay some claim to one of the largest empires in human history in terms of expansiveness over geographic area although it was one of the shortest of the great dynasties of

China. The Yuan Empire extended West to Poland and East to Siberia, North and South from Moscow to the Arabian Peninsula and from Siberia to Vietnam and lasted only a hundred years. The Mongol leader, Timuchin, who was to become known as Genghis Khan, established the Yuan Dynasty. The Mongols were a loosely connected ethnic tribal community that lived on the edge of the Gobi Desert in an area now known as Outer Mongolia. Genghis Khan organized a small ruthless army of only about 120 thousand men using speed and maneuver, massed force, and terror he exterminated all communities that resisted his will. The Khans initially ruled over China as bandits, but over time were surprisingly tolerant of Chinese culture moving the capital from Mongolia to Beijing in 1264 and built the Forbidden City. In 1271 Kublai Khan adopted a Chinese dynastic name, giving birth to the Yuan Dynasty. The Chinese culture was strong enough to survive the influence of a regional minority ethnic culture, and was even able to grow in vitality while expanding its area of influence. The Yuan dynasty was responsible for one of the greatest transmissions of culture between China and the rest of the world during this period. This was the dynastic era that exploited the “Silk Road” and accepted the Italian explorer Marco Polo as a member of the Khan’s court from 1275-1291. The Chinese never truly accepted the Yuan emperors as legitimate largely because they never totally accepted Chinese culture and language, while the Mongols rejected the Yuan emperors as becoming too Chinese. The fall of the Yuan dynasty was brought about by rebellion both in China and in the Mongolian region of the Yuan Empire. The fall of the Yuan was also complicated by natural disasters when the Yellow River changed course destroying, by flood, irrigation systems and causing great famine during the 1340’s. Finally, Chu Yuan-chang a peasant who had been a monk and a bandit leader, and who had lost his family in the famine lead a rebel army against the Yuan driving them from power eventually back to Mongolia and established the Ming Dynasty.⁸

The Ming Dynasty regained dominion over lost territories fighting back the Mongols and conquering northern Vietnam while expanding Chinese influence by accessing sea trade routes. The Chinese fleet sailed the China Seas, the Indian Ocean, and west to the African coast. The Ming lost their power to the Manchus due to long wars with the Mongols and incursions by the Japanese. These challenges opened the Ming for invasion from ethnic groups outside the Han origins. In 1644 The Ming Dynasty was replaced with another foreign dynasty the Qing (1644-1911).⁹

The Qing rulers were Manchus they gained control of China proper and conquered Mongolia in the 17th century and gained controlled of central Asia in the 18th century. The challenges to the Qing Dynasty did not come from boarder states and tribes as it had for other Chinese dynasties, but the threat came via the sea from western cultures. The Qing failed to react to the annexation of its domain and power by westerners and lost favor with the people of China after failed reform movement late in the 19th century. In 1898 the Dowager Empress Ci Xi engineered a coup d' tat over the Qing emperor Guangxu. Guangxu supported a radical change to Chinese culture and society that crossed most of China's societal structures advocating practical studies and pulling away from orthodox Chinese societal structures toward a constitutional monarchy. The movement of the Chinese government away from traditional views was too radical for the ultraconservative ruling elite that supported a gradual and moderate change to China's government. The Dowager Empress was besieged by rebellion in 1900 by the Yihequan or the (Society of) Righteousness and Harmony Boxers" who were anti-foreign and anti-Christian. The Boxers and follow on revolutionaries saw China as being taken apart and abused by the harsh excesses and privileges of foreign people and governments.¹⁰

The Boxer rebellion failed but it set in the minds of the Chinese people that the only method for reform to be effective was through revolution and the establishment of a government patterned after a successful Japanese model of the time. The revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen, advocated a form of republican government based on three principles; nationalism democracy, and the people's livelihood. The three principles advocated the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty, the end of foreign hegemony over China, the establishment of popular elections to choose a representative form of government, and the establishment of socialism as a social and economic measure to regulate the ownership of land and production.¹¹

Yuan Shikai the military, commander-in-chief, challenged Sun Yat-sen's leadership of the state. The Republican Revolution fell into regional factions of warlords that divided China. Sun Yat-sen looked to the west for help but was rejected, he then turned to the newly formed Soviet Union for assistance. The Soviets received Sun and provided aid and support for a soviet style revolution training for example Chiang Kai-shek a future Chinese leader. Sun never fully reunified China nor gained control of northern provinces in his lifetime but one of his lieutenants, Chiang Kai-shek (or Jiang Jieshi), did eventually gain control of all China at least nominally by 1928. Under the Nationalist government aligned with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Chiang, as Commander-in-Chief of the National Revolutionary Army was able to nearly defeat the northern warlords. Chiang rejected the ideology of the Soviets and later would try to rid China of the communist. By 1926, however, the alliance between the Nationalist (Guomindang)-CCP had divided the revolutionary cause into left and right wings. The Guomindang Nationalist were able to modernize and improve China's economic, industrial infrastructure, and societal services, but the Guomindang were undermined by a the split in the nationalist movement, and the gradual rise of the communist in China lead by a revolutionary

from the Hunan province, Mao Zedong. The Guomindang became focused ending the Communist movement by consolidating and maintaining power at the expense of the peasant population.¹²

Mao Zedong took advantage of the dissatisfaction of the peasants, breaking with the Marxist teaching of revolution through the activation of the urban industrial proletariat uprising as the source of revolution and basing the Chinese model for revolution on the repressed peasant population.¹³ Mao determined that the urban proletariat was too few and too apathetic toward revolution to act as a driving force of change and rightly gauged the revolutionary potential of the peasant class. Mao's basic policy was to arouse and organize the people, achieve internal unification, establish bases, equip forces, recover national strength, destroy the enemy's national strength, and regain lost territories.¹⁴ In 1949 Mao Zedong was able to consolidate power and the Chinese Communist came to power in China.

Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and the Communist Dynasty

Mao Zedong foresaw China's peasant population as the potential source for rebellion and struggled with the nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek as early as 1921 to gain control of China. It was the beginning of the communist Cultural Revolution within China and Mao harnessed the potential of the peasant's natural and historic tendency for collectivization. The peasants of China have for thousands of years relied on each other as an agrarian community for security and governance in order to overcome the difficulties and challenges of life. Mao, a member of the middle peasant class, through his studies and observations became a master of the indirect method, the "Ying and the Yang". The "Ying and the Yang" are elemental Chinese philosophical concept of opposite polarities that are pervasive in our world. It is the philosophical concept of the male and the female, cold and hot, and weakness and strength. It is

within this concept that Mao saw the weaknesses of guerrillas as the very source of its strength. The guerrilla was unable to mass force and was vulnerable to attack by a conventional force, but was able because of its small group structure to move rapidly and to enter vulnerable rear areas where larger forces could not operate.¹⁵ Mao in his book “On Guerrilla Warfare” states that the guerrilla war is “one aspect of the entire war, which, although alone is incapable of producing a decision attacks the enemy in a every quarter, diminishes the area under his control, and increases China’s national strength”¹⁶.

Mao understood the necessity to investigate history and apply the truths that it has to offer its student. China’s history is full of examples of the oppressed peasant fighting for freedom, the commoner rising up to rally the people for a political purpose that coincides with the will of the people. Liu Pang a commoner rose up against Ch’in oppression and mismanagement founding the longest dynasty in Chinese history the Han Dynasty.¹⁷ “Without a political goal, guerrilla warfare must fail, as it must if its political objectives do not coincide with the aspirations of the people and their sympathy, cooperation, and assistance cannot be gained. The political goal must be clearly and precisely indicated to the inhabitants of guerrilla zones, and their national consciousness awakened” in order to be successful¹⁸. Sun Tzu’s edicts and guidance ring throughout Mao’s writings reflecting both Mao’s studies and the strong Chinese cultural traditions that is carried on today. Mao Zedong offered the peasant a vision of equality that promised the people freedom, but somehow in the translation of the ideal to practice the dream slipped back into the cultural traditions and bureaucracies of Confucianism and the establishment of a ruling communist elite. The traditional family centered culture of China was however reoriented toward a republican albeit totalitarian political cultural structure that focused on the strict teachings of Marxism as the cultural center vice the family¹⁹. Mao focused China inwardly

completing the revolution through military struggle by ejecting foreign interest, repatriating lost territories, and consolidating control in his hands and in the hands of a small group of loyal elite leaders.²⁰ Mao used the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) as a source of power and built it into a huge mostly low-tech organization mostly focused on total war but applied to putting down uprisings, protecting its continental borders, and regaining lost territories where and when possible.²¹ The Maoist era ended in 1976 when Mao as supreme leader and General Secretary of the Communist Party and Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) died and was replaced by Deng Xiaoping.

Many Chinese remember Deng Xiaoping as a reformer who worked to increase China's economic status through policy reform after years of repression by his Maoist predecessors. Deng also focused China's national and foreign policy and retained the state party system as the controlling agent within China. Deng's reforms meant change for the domestic economic relationship with the rest of the world linking domestic and foreign policy moving toward a more socialist marketplace and ideology. Deng also instituted a policy of opening China to the west that would allow China to receive advanced technologies through foreign investment, land reform, and by sending students abroad.²² Senior Colonel Peng Guangqian writes of Deng as a strategic thinker that has taken China to the next level of revolution. Deng Xiaoping's strategic thought constitute a scientific system that was based not in philosophy and classical study, but in the practical application of leadership and planning the socialist modernization of China.²³ Deng had consolidated power as supreme ruler of China through his position as Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC). China has struggled through each generation of rule to control and maintain unity and order within its borders. Deng's strategic vision centered five

(5) principle objectives: 1) development, 2) security, 3) stability, 4) peace, and 5) national revitalization.²⁴

Even though a leader of the Communist party can not be immediately ordained as the supreme ruler the power of the government rests in the hands of a few men. Most of these men within the CCP power elite hold their power close and protected within the CMC of the Peoples Republic of China.²⁵ The CMC members, headed today by Jiang Zemin, Communist Party General Secretary, have the backing of the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA). The CMC is the same organization that enabled Deng Xiaoping to gain and consolidate power in the post Mao era of China. It appears that Jiang Zemin has not gained the same level of authority that Deng had attained at his death. Jiang is however pursuing the strategic course set by Deng.

China's history has played a decisive role in the development of its current system and culture. The autocratic elite of the old regimes have changed their mask in favor of a communist elite based on collectivism. The cultural trends of China ensured a series of dynastic kingdoms and empires and until China is able to escape the economic repression of an adolescent agrarian revolutionary state system it may be forced to continue the series of dynastic rule in China. Minxin Pei states, in his article in *Foreign Policy* (fall 1999), that the party in a party state is naturally organized and singularly suited for governance and administration to meet the short term needs of state building and economic modernization. The state party, "one that has led a revolution, is the ready made organizational vehicle capable of performing the functions of a state through its parallel structure of administration and coercion and in this case the state governs in name only and the party runs the show."²⁶ The CCP has several weaknesses that mirror dynastic declines in China's past. The CCP organization like several dynasties in China's history is in a period of decay and ideological decline impairing the organization's

effectiveness.²⁷ Similar to the fall of the Han and the Qing dynasties, the CCP has attempted to reform its policies and mediate societal and party conflict. The CCP reforms like the Han and the Qing dynasty reforms of their time may be too little too late as the party's rural infrastructure, peasant, and urban worker support disappears. The CCP also sees societal reaction to its reforms and corruption as a direct challenge to its authority similar to the tax revolt during the Han Dynasty. Chinese patience is seemingly endless for both the peasant and the government it may be years before a popular uprising takes hold or for that matter the same applies for the communist governments reforms to become more socialistic and inclusive and less authoritarian and autocratic.

Notes

¹ Samuel B. Griffith, *"Sun Tzu: The Art of War"*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1971. PP. v-vii

² Dianne L. Smith and Paul H.B. Goodwin, *Asian Security to the Year 2000 Chapter II, China's Security Policy Enters the 21st Century: A View from Beijing*. Center for Strategic and International Studies, US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute Press, 1996. PP. 37-60

³ Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall the Empty Fortress – China's Search for Security*. WW Norton & Company, New York 1997. PP 118-122.

⁴ Yan Xinqiang, *The Great Wall* The China News, 1999. PP 1, available on the Internet <http://china.news.org/ChineseLiterature/c198-3/c198-3-13.html>.

⁵ Ibid. PP 3.

⁶ Richard Hooker, *Ancient China: The Former Han* 1996. PP1-2, available on the Internet <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/chempire/formhan.htm>.

⁷ Samuel B. Griffith, *Mao Tse-tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, 1961. Reprinted for the US Marine Corps as FMFRP 12-18, 1989 PP 12-17.

⁸ Richard Hooker, *Ancient China: The Mongolian Empire: The Yuan Dynasty* 1996. PP1-3, Available on the Internet <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/chempire/yuan.htm>.

⁹ Rinn-Sup Shinn and Robert L. Worden, *Army Area Handbook*, Department of the Army, 1994. PP __. Available on the Internet <http://www.chaos.umd.edu/history/imperial3.html>.

¹⁰ Ibid. PP 1 <http://www.chaos.umd.edu/history/imperial3.html>.

¹¹ Ibid. PP 1. <http://www.chaos.umd.edu/history/republican.html>.

¹² Ibid. PP 1. <http://www.chaos.umd.edu/history/republican2.html>.

¹³ Griffith, *Mao Tse-tung on Guerrilla Warfare*. PP 17.

¹⁴ Griffith, *Mao Tse-tung on Guerrilla Warfare*. PP 42.

¹⁵ Griffith, *Mao Tse-tung on Guerrilla Warfare*. PP 25.

¹⁶ Griffith, *Mao Tse-tung on Guerrilla Warfare*. PP 50.

¹⁷ Hooker, *Ancient China: The Former Han*. PP 1.

Notes

¹⁸ Samuel B. Griffith, *Mao's Primer on Guerrilla War*, extract from the New York Times 1961 and reprinted by the US Marine Corps in FMFRP 12-25, *The Guerrilla and How to Fight Him* 1992. PP 5.

¹⁹ Ronald N. Montaperto, *China Prepares for the Future: the Challenges for the United States*, in *The Future of China US Relations* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, September 1992). PP 32.

²⁰ Griffith, *Mao Tse-tung on Guerrilla Warfare*. PP 43

²¹ Nathan, PP 139. Mao turned the energies of the PLA to internal problems and conflicts with China, in the 1950's battling the remaining KMT, occupying Tibet, wiping out the landlord class and to suppress counterrevolutionary elements. This also the time that Mao instituted the Great Leap forward, which was a policy, directed at destroying professionalism in all sectors of life within China.

²² Nathan, PP 28.

²³ Peng Guangqian, *The Strategic Thought of Deng Xiaoping in The Chinese View of Future Warfare*, edited by Michael Pillsbury, 1997. PP 1. Available on the Internet <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/books.html>

²⁴ Guangqian. PP1

²⁵ Michael D. Swaine, *The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policy Making*, RAND Report, National Defense Research Institute 1997. PP 45.

²⁶ Minxin Pei, *Will China Become Another Indonesia*, Foreign Policy Fall 1999. PP 105

²⁷ Ibid. PP 106

Part 2

China's National Strategy Ambition

National Interest, Strategic Objectives, and Grand Strategy

Today China's national strategy is based largely on basic themes and concepts that orient China's interest toward predictable strategic objectives and actions.

The historical elements that influence China's national interest have been based on a series of dynastic kingdoms and empires. Each evolution of these great dynasties is marked by three (3) repeating, general or basic, themes. The first general theme is that China is a feudal and agrarian state by nature. The second general theme is that China's peasants although accepting feudal and imperial dynastic reign will, when pushed by extensive abuse and unable to provide for family necessities will, resort to rebellion. China's peasant population when burdened over long periods of time by excessive governmental corruption can be influenced and persuaded into action against the ruling elite, such as unfair taxation and corruption of officials. The third general theme is interesting to note the dramatic role that natural disasters have played in affecting dynastic rule in China. Roughly, ten percent of China's land area is suitable for farming. When the pressure of a series of natural disasters affects this vital growing regions in eastern and central China it becomes clear that it is almost impossible for China's government to provide for the provisioning of its people and to maintain civil order jeopardizing the government's sovereignty.

The thousands of years of China's history have produced four (4) governmental and cultural strategic orienting principles. China's first orienting principle is a cultural and socially Chinese centric worldview based on ancient philosophies and teachings, such as Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism which were developed and institutionalized during the Han Dynasty.¹ Today a merit type system still exists in China at the bureaucratic level. However at the ministerial and commission levels of party and government personal power rules these giant bureaucracies within the CCP and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC). The second orienting principle is China's resistance to hegemony. China has since the eighteenth century been extremely resistant to hegemonic activity by other nations where Chinese national interest and sovereignty are concerned and will when given the perception of hegemonic influence protect itself either directly or through a third party. The Chinese view of the Soviet Union's hegemonic actions in South Asia and Southeast Asia during the 1970's and 80's concerned the Chinese who viewed the Soviets as trying to encircle China and attack Chinese interest. China used third party actors to counter the stronger adversary nation's hegemony. The Chinese opposed Soviet hegemony by using the United States to direct Soviet interest and national wealth to the containment of US interest in the region and away from containment of China's interest in the region. China's policies during this time provided a window for the United States to normalize relations with the Chinese in 1977.²

During the 1950's and 60's China also established substantial diplomatic and military relations and aid programs with Pakistan in order to counter India's regional power development and India's relations with the Soviet Union post the Sino-Soviet split.³ Over the next four decades the Chinese provided Pakistan with political military aid supporting Pakistan in a series of wars with India and specifically with missile technology and nuclear material for it's nuclear

program in large part to counter India's growing power.⁴ China's relations with India has improved over the last several years shifting from the loosely polarized US-Sino-Pakistani "pact" against the Soviet-Indian "pact", to a Sino-Indian agreement with the collapse of Soviet power. In 1996 when Jiang Zemin visited India the two countries agreed on a line of control in the Aksai Plateau region a disputed territory. The agreement limited military presents and exercises on the boarder giving China and Indian common ground on which to oppose the US, who was seen as the single hegemonic power in the world by the Chinese and the Indians.⁵

The third orienting principle is national sovereignty and territorial integrity. China has since the Ch'in dynasty struggled to maintain the sovereign control and integrity of its land and sea areas. During the Qing Dynasty, China was able to establish protectorates in Tibet (Xizang), Outer Mongolia, Central Asia as far west as the Pamir Mountains, and in Taiwan the last outpost of Qing (Manchus) resistance.⁶ Today the PRC is involved in activities designed to regain control of lost territories such Taiwan and the Spratly Islands recently have repatriated Hong Kong and Macao.⁷ The Chinese have made border agreements with the Indians and are looking to repatriate the rogue island province of Taiwan. China has called for Taiwan to negotiate a return to Chinese rule under a proposal of "one country-two systems" first initiated by Deng Xiaoping and is being carried on by Jiang Zemin, and the Chinese government, as a peaceful means to settle international disputes concerning Chinese sovereignty and territorial integrity.⁸

The fourth orienting principle is patience. The Chinese history and its culture are testaments to patient and deliberate action that over time will defeat an enemy. The Chinese waited out the Mongol's Yuan Dynasty and although exposed to many new cultural influences during this time were able to maintain their Han culture.⁹

Through the 1960's and 70's China's leadership focused on maintaining cohesion and control of the political environment inward and their strategic focus was narrow towards China's national security strategy choosing to emphasis homeland defense. Today China's emphasis on homeland defense is still a great concern and is key to the application and maintenance of power within China but the method of maintaining China's strategic security has reoriented outwardly. The CMC directs the strategic vision and policy downward through the General Staff Department (GSD) to the PLA, the party, and the bureaucracies of the government. It appears that the Chinese are still using the models advanced by Deng Xiaoping. Deng's national strategy centered on five (5) principle objectives: 1) development, 2) security, 3) stability, 4) peace, and 5) national revitalization.¹⁰

China must overcome two hundred years of economic mismanagement, but the Chinese plan is based on patience. Deng in describing his goals for economic development called for the liberation and development of production forces to increase the comprehensive power of the socialist state and to increase the standard of living for the Chinese people. He sighted several goals, which should be linked to a three step development strategy; first, double the gross national product (GNP) and solve the problems of food and clothing provisioning, second to reach a GNP of \$1 trillion by the end of the century with a per capita income of \$800 to \$1000, and third to reach a level of comparative prosperity with developed countries within 50 years.¹¹ The Chinese have focused modernization on the development of four areas, agriculture, energy, transportation, science, and education. The development of this focused modernization campaign centers on the concept of continued policy reform and openness. China's policies are deliberate and patience by design. Chinese intellectuals are now considered part of the working class and knowledge and professionalism is respected. Science and technology is viewed as

being China's main production force. China has sent its students into the world to gather information and knowledge as an investment for the future of China. The Chinese see the socialist movement at a low point but are projecting their vision 50 to 100 years in the future.¹²

The Chinese development and modernization program cuts across all national structures economic, military, civilian industry, informational, and diplomatic. The economic development of China is directed at a socialist approach to modernization that is an attempt to revitalize every aspect of China as a nation creating a stable environment within China and abroad. The first step in the program is to strengthen the Chinese economy through the continued growth of the socialist market based economy. China looked to foreign investment and knowledge to help the modernization process providing not only money to China but also information on how to organize and manage modern corporations. The modernization and development of military corporations owned and managed by the PLA have paralleled the modernization and development of Chinese civilian corporations.¹³ In recent years the PLA has attempted to purchase and manage a terminal at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard, and most recently a PLA corporation has been contracted to manage and operate two of four ports on the Panama Canal.¹⁴ The China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO) a PLA owned or affiliated company controls ports in Vancouver, Canada and the Caribbean proving their commercial insurgency around the Pacific Rim and beyond.¹⁵ The world has been amazed at the extraordinary rapid growth of China's economy. In fact the Chinese economy may have taken off rapidly due to the opening of Chinese markets to western nations which infuse large amounts of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), that is difficult to measure, but sheds some light on the long term trends of the Chinese economy. In 1997, China received \$45 billion dollars in FDI, which was 80% of China's total inflow of FDI.¹⁶ Most of this investment was from ethnic Chinese mostly from East Asia

circulating investment in and out of China to attract tax concessions, while US and European Union (EU) FDI has dropped pointing to the contraction of the Chinese economy.¹⁷ The Chinese leadership has also engaged in foreign military sales as a means to fund development and modernization of the military industrial complex, but have a small market share of the world arms market as compared with the US and the United Kingdom.¹⁸ China however does have a niche market with developing countries, which can not afford high priced western weapon systems. China does exert vast influence in certain markets such as arms transfers to Pakistan and Iran where the Chinese have sold missiles and nuclear technology.¹⁹ The bottom line on the Chinese economy is that it isn't truly a major player in the world economy today, but the vision is in place for China to eventually become a major economic power given that China is able to overcome some significant economic challenges in the next fifty years.

Security and stability are closely linked for China. China's national security rest on the concept of mutual security between China and its neighbors security interest as well as the entire world. The Chinese have developed a policy of engagement with the world at large.²⁰ China has established diplomatic contact with every country around the world.²¹ China has been busy developing a well-rounded national security strategy not based solely on military power. China has attempted to build through its contacts with the international community the diplomatic power base necessary to fulfill this concept. China is working day and night to develop the scientific and technological knowledge base necessary to exercise its power as a flexible deterrent option to cow would-be adversaries, and to maintain and regain sovereignty over its territories.²² A stable security environment enables China to exercise the continuation of its modernization efforts unimpeded by outside influence. China sees its territorial integrity and national sovereignty as key to security. China will never forget the enduring legacy that was a result of

foreign intervention and abuses suffered during the Qing Dynasty of the 18th and 19th century. China is focused on the repatriation of lost territories.²³ One would think that the method that China would use to accomplish the task of regaining lost territories would be through the application of military power. China actually seems to be focused on not using military power in preserving national security at present, but in using military power and defense in economic development. China would rather use the indirect approach and use a third nation to accomplish the task that its military would normally undertake. The use of Pakistan to deter the growing influence of India and Russia in South Asia, or the sale of missiles to Iran in an effort to limit US hegemony in the world are characteristic of China's methods of conducting containment operations through asymmetric means.

China is in the process of reorienting its national army making it a smaller standing army with a large reserve, which would improve quality and free up labor for the civilian work force.²⁴ As China reduces the size of its land army China builds and upgrades its air force and navy purchasing a Russian destroyer that would enable China to exert greater influence in the China Sea, which has a direct affect on Taiwan and pressures US hegemonic action in Asia.²⁵ China is continuing its strategic security through an active defense by using the characteristics and patterns of limited modern warfare developing asymmetric capabilities in order to win future wars by using China's strengths and attacking an enemy's weaknesses. The writings of Sun Tzu play to this approach to security. Sun Tzu writes "the acme of skill is securing the victory without battle" China believes in this edict and works to accomplish its challenge everyday.

China's national interest linked to sovereignty, reunification, and national development can be explained in greater detail by examining China's activities in South Asia. China's policy hinges on China's self-reliance, desire to regain lost territories, and to opposition to hegemonies

China views hegemonies as the root cause of modern war at the global and regional level.²⁶ China sees its own preeminence in Asia and sees itself as safeguarding world peace by its opposition to hegemonic nations such as the US and in the past Japan, India, and Russia.²⁷ Due to Indian dominance in the region of South Asia, China has established and maintained a thirty (30) year relationship with Pakistan with whom they jointly oppose Indian regional hegemonic aggression. Pakistan fears for its existence and China has been concerned for its territorial integrity and security on its southern boarder as well as challenges to China's stability and rule in Tibet.²⁸ China's policy of Indian containment since the 1950's was developed over disputed territory with the Indian government. China built a strategic road between the Xinjiang and Tibet that ran through Ladakh a disputed territory, which resulted in boarder clashes.²⁹ In 1959 China proposed a summit that worked out a deal that China would agree to give up the eastern area of dispute in exchange for India's acceptance of China's strategic control of the vital Aksai Chin plateau an area that India claimed.³⁰ The Soviet Union became involved and proposed an even split because it had invested considerable wealth in both states and because of this the Sino-Soviet rift became public knowledge. By 1962 the Indians had become increasingly aggressive toward the region and Chinese presents.³¹ The conflict escalated with the Soviets backing the Indian and creating for the Chinese a sense of encirclement with India on China's southern flank and the USSR on the North.³² China countered the Indo-Soviet Pact by establishing a pact with Pakistan creating an informal alliance between 1965 and 1971. China also attempted to counter the encirclement by establishing treaties with Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal as well as with the US in 1972 but the Indians still held control of the region.³³ In the 1980's China provided Pakistani nuclear design, and production equipment to develop nuclear material and in the 1990's China provided Pakistan with missile launch vehicle technology in the form of the M-11,

medium range ballistic missile.³⁴ Relations polarized at this time between China, Pakistan and the US, against the Indians and Soviets. The Pakistani's assisted the Afghani resistance in opposing the Soviets in Afghanistan and while maintaining close ties and support of China and the US.³⁵ In 1984-1985 the Soviets desired to improve relations with China and the Indians soon followed the Russians lead. The Indians found themselves on their own when the Soviet Union failed but the Indians had been building their arms achieving parity with the Chinese in conventional arm and provided sufficient nuclear deterrent based on untested missile technology by developing their own ICBM's.³⁶ The stability of the region is still in question as the tenuous nuclear balance between Pakistan and India continues to be struggled over by these two nations and has become an on going concern of the world. A line of control has been established between China and India in the Aksai Chin Plateau where the Chinese still occupy territory.³⁷ Jiang Zemin visited India in 1996 and signed an agreement to limit exercises and to reduce troop presents on the boarder by both the Indians and the Chinese.³⁸ Deng Xiaoping, when speaking on the issues of national sovereignty and reunification to the Indian Delegation on the Sino-Indian boarder dispute, said, "This is a problem left by history. You have your people's emotions and we have ours. The two sides will only be able to persuade our own people by taking a package plan."³⁹ China has tried to make the sovereignty issue a clear position that it can and will pursue as a course of action in the future without bending but in this boarder dispute and given the strategic situation in 1993 China made great gains with regard to position and security.⁴⁰ The collapse of the Soviet system has given the Chinese, the Russians, and the Indians similar interest in opposing US dominance in the Asia and the world.

China's strategic ambition is focused mainly in its economic recovery and modernization of China's national structure and institutions. China clearly links its national interest to

sovereignty, reunification, and security no matter “if it takes one hundred years or a thousand”⁴¹. China espouses a commitment to opposing hegemonies wherever they occur in the world and that China will not engage in hegemonic dominance. Given the insight into China’s stated strategic objectives we need to ask how China will act in the future.

Notes

- ¹ Hooker, *Ancient China: The Former Han*, 1996. PP 1.
- ² Patrick Tyler, *Dancing With China*, Foreign Affairs September/October 1999 Vol. 78, No.5. PP 108
- ³ Jonathan D. Pollack, China and Asia’s Nuclear Future, from Bridging the Nonproliferation Divide: The United States and India. University Press of America, MD 1996. PP 108.
- ⁴ Pollack, PP 110
- ⁵ Nathan, PP 121
- ⁶ Rinn-Sup Shinn, *The Rise of the Manchus*. 1994. PP 2. Available on the Internet <http://www.chaos.umd.edu/history/imperial3.html>
- ⁷ Nathan, PP16
- ⁸ Colonel Hong Baoxiu, *Deng Xiaoping’s Theory of War and Peace in The Chinese View of Future Warfare*, edited by Michael Pillsbury, 1997. PP 9 Available on the Internet <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/books.html>
- ⁹ Rinn-Sup Shinn, PP 1
- ¹⁰ Guangqian, PP 1
- ¹¹ Guangqian, PP 2
- ¹² Guangqian, PP 2
- ¹³ Fang Ning, *Defense policy in the New Era*, in *The Chinese View of Future Warfare*, edited by Michael Pillsbury, 1997. PP 18 Available on the Internet <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/books.html>
- ¹⁴ Carla Anne Robbins, *Why Should The US Even Care It’s About To Lose Panama Canal?* The Wall Street Journal, December 10, 1999. PP 1.
- ¹⁵ Dana Rohrabacher, *Should Congress Be Concerned About China And The Panama Canal*, Insight, December 27, 1999. PP 40
- ¹⁶ Gerald Segal, *Does China Matter?* Foreign Affairs September/October 1999. Vol. 78, No. 5. PP 27
- ¹⁷ Ibid., PP 28
- ¹⁸ Ibid., PP 28
- ¹⁹ Ibid., PP 30
- ²⁰ Guangqian, PP 2-3.
- ²¹ Paul H.B. Godwin, *China’s Security Policy Enters the 21st Century: The View from Beijing* in Asian Security to the 2000, Center for Strategic and International Studies, US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute 1996. Chp2, PP 41.
- ²² Thomas Crampton, *High-Tech China Upsets Power Balance* International Herald Tribune, February 26-27, 2000. PP 1.

Notes

²³ Colonel Hong Bin, *Deng Xiaoping's Perspective on National Interest in The Chinese View of Future Warfare*, edited by Michael Pillsbury, 1997. PP 11 Available on the Internet <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/books.html>

²⁴ Fang Ning, PP 17-18.

²⁵ Barbara Slavin and Steven Komarow, *China's Military Upgrade May Raise Stakes In Taiwan*, USA Today November 19,1999. PP 16.

²⁶ Fang Ning, PP16.

²⁷ Colonel Hong Baoxiu, PP 8

²⁸ Nathan, PP 118.

²⁹ Godwin, PP 51.

³⁰ Nathan, PP 118.

³¹ Nathan, PP119.

³² Nathan, PP 119.

³³ Nathan, PP 120.

³⁴ Nathan, PP 120.

³⁵ Robert Wirsing, *Pakistan's Security in the New World Order: Going From Bad To Worse*, in Asian Security to the 2000, Center for Strategic and International Studies, US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute 1996. Chp3, PP 78.

³⁶ Nathan, PP 119.

³⁷ Nathan, PP120.

³⁸ Nathan, PP121.

³⁹ Bin, PP 10.

⁴⁰ Godwin, PP 57.

⁴¹ Bin, PP 11.

Part 3

China's Future Ambition

*"If there is a gap between the information capabilities of the two sides, many events will be transparent only to one side. A statement by Sun Tzu in "The Art of War" applies to the one who has the strongest information capability: 'By knowing the enemy and knowing yourself, you can fight a hundred battles and win them all.'"*¹

—Chang Mengxiong (member Committee of Science, Technology and Industry of the System Engineering Institute, PRC.)

China has been engaged the world diplomatically as part of its opening up policy, while building national power. China's economic growth rate has not been as dramatic as expected due to economic slowdowns in Asia and wide spread corruption in the government and leadership. China will not be able to challenge the US in this half of the century economically unless the US has a catastrophic economic crisis.²

China's military growth is impressive but even though it has some world class technologies it is a far cry from being a peer power of the US in the next 20-50 years. However China could become a major flexible regional power with multi-faceted capabilities within the same time frame especially if aligned with Russia. The evidence of a new Sino-Russian alliance has been growing since the 1989 summit that was cut short by the Tiananmen Square. China and Russia are in a position to benefit from their mutual trade needs in that China is in a position to buy military hardware and Russia is in a position to sell military hardware for hard currency.³ China

does however recognize its weaknesses and is increasing spending on military equipment and organization estimates indicate that China has increase defense spending as much as 54% since 1991.⁴ China knows itself and has developed a strategy that exploits its own strengths and the enemy's weaknesses. In the case of the US, the Chinese take advantage of the US' greatest strength as a vulnerability, it sees the US as a nation that is open to the exploitation of information, its associated technologies, and sciences. China has engaged in the deliberate extraction of US secrets and technologies to make exponential gains in its objectives of security, self-reliance, and the defeat of hegemony. China is aggressively moving towards its stated long-term strategic goals of national dominance and influence on the world stage through its opposition to hegemony, which is currently directed at the US. The Chinese-Russian cooperation gives both countries a common cause in containing US interest as they see as hegemonic.⁵ China acting with Russia lends itself to the conclusion that China being pragmatic will not attempt to face the US alone but will enlist the help of third parties to reduce US influence in all regions around the world. China will befriend every nation that opposes US interest around the world and will help them to nibble away at US economic strength. These third party strategies and tactics is China's trademark, China used these same strategies against the Soviets in the 1960's and 70's by employing a US and Pakistani alliance. China used these same strategies and tactics against the Indians in South Asia from the 1950's through the 1990's by employing the Pakistani's and other South and Southeast Asian countries. China used the lost territories claim of the Spratly and Parcel Islands in 1995 as a move to gain control of a vital oil reserves, and to gain control of vital sea lanes and fisheries offering joint development of the region to the Vietnamese and the Philippines but under Chinese sovereignty. China has show a willingness to defend its claims with force in the past.⁶ The fear of the Philippines and Vietnam

is that China would engage in joint development and then at some point in the not too distant future terminate the joint venture.⁷

China believes in its historic preeminence as a culture and as a nation. Its drive to claim territories it has occupied during the past three thousand years will cause China to attain the status of a regional and world power, and may in fact because of this influence become a more aggressive and direct rival to the US. China's influence in the world has taken on an asymmetric application of power through the use of military owned businesses as one means to gain access to a region. Recently a Chinese military associated company gained a contract to operate ports in the Panama Canal Zone which will give the Chinese a forward base to project communism into South and Central America, especially Colombia a country that is on the edge of maintaining its democratic orientation. The Chinese military and political leaders today describe the US as a hegemonic empire that is taking advantage of the world and Asia. China applies these asymmetric operational and strategic strategies to influence and gain advantage over the US and its allies by directing and employing third party actors as an indirect method to contain US interest these same methods are being applied now in Central America.

It would appear that the Chinese use of Sun Tzu's strategy of deception and avoiding the fight has worked well and has reached the US. The China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO) attempted to gain control of a portion of the Long Beach Naval Shipyard as a homeport for its ships. COSCO is a Chinese military owned organization that has been caught smuggling AK-47's into the Port of Oakland in 1996.⁸ In 1996 allegations were made that China had been implicated in an attempt to influence US Presidential election through contributions to the Clinton-Gore campaign. In May 1999 the former Democratic fund-raiser Johnny Chung told Congress the he received \$300 thousand dollars from a Chinese general officer representing the

Chinese government interested in influencing the 1996 presidential election.⁹ We see from these asymmetric operations and activities in which the Chinese government has engaged in provides us an insight into how China will act in the future. China will continue to build alliances that will oppose US interest in the world and in Asia and cause the US to expend national wealth reacting to asymmetric and symmetric threats. China will continue to expand its influence in the America's and continue to build on its modernization programs at home while consolidating lost territories if it takes one hundred years or one thousand years.

Notes

¹ Chang Mengxiong, edited and translated by Michael Pillsbury *Chinese View of Future War, Part IV: Long term future Warfare the Revolution in Military Affairs Weapons of the 21st Century*. National Defense University press book, Institute for National Strategic Studies, part 4 PP 1, Available from the Internet <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/chinaview/chinacont.html>. This paper first appeared in China Military Science, Spring 1995.

² Segal, PP 27.

³ Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough, *Russia-China Ties*, Inside the Ring, Washington Times, 3 September 1999. PP 16

⁴ Zalmay Khalilzad, RAND news release on *RAND analysts urge major Shift in US Policy Proposal Modifies, Hedges, Against a Chinese Challenge Study also offers Fresh Look at China's Military Modernization Drive*, September 10, 1999. PP 1

⁵ James Hackett, *New Anti-American Axis?*, The Washington Times, February 24, 2000. PP1.

⁶ Nathan, PP 116.

⁷ Godwin, PP 52.

⁸ Sarah Foster, *Military Intrusion, Long Beach NSY and COSCO*, World Net daily 1 June 1998. PP 1. Available on the Internet <http://www.worldnetdaily.com>.

⁹ Robert Suro, *Not Chinese Agent, Chung Says*, Washington Post, May 12, 1999. PP A2.

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